

Hot Issue

September 2, 2010

Activity: EPA issues final School Air Toxics Report for St. Josaphat School in Chicago, IL

Press: Region 5 had a news release yesterday (will be attached to the email). An article in today's Chicago Tribune calls the study's findings into question over concerns about the wind direction. We are putting him in touch with an expert from OAQPS to address his questions, so there may be a second article tomorrow.

Background: As part of the Administrator's initiative to understand whether outdoor toxic air pollution poses health concerns to schoolchildren, EPA chose 63 schools across the country for monitoring, including St. Josaphat School in the Lincoln Park neighborhood of Chicago, IL. Monitoring and data analysis have been performed, and a final report has been released. Based on the monitoring results, EPA found no concern for risk of health problems from short-term or long-term exposures to hexavalent chromium, lead, or other toxic metals. Because no concentrations of concern were found, monitoring has been discontinued at the school. The report is posted on EPA's website at: <http://www.epa.gov/schoolair/schools.html>.

Region 5 has been in contact with the school throughout the project. They were very concerned going into this project due to the high visibility of this initiative—as a private school, they were fearful of the possible negative publicity affecting their enrollment. The school was therefore very pleased with the results. However, they may have additional concerns about the Tribune article(s). We will remain in contact with them and be available to answer questions from citizens and school officials.

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